

15 January 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Uses to be Served by the Proposed Project
on Coercive Persuasion [redacted] at [redacted]

1. One of your concerns before finally deciding upon this project involves the uses to which the project would be put. I should like to give below some of those uses as described by the consumers, but first would like to state one of my views on the conduct of research and development. I believe that it is absolutely necessary that some research must be undertaken which precedes specific research and development requirements in support of specific operations. This provides discovery of new ideas for use in the conduct of official programs or further research. It is, of course, quite essential that such research be properly orientated in order that it may not wander into fields which from all appearances would probably never be of concern to the government.

2. Although I am not pressing the attached project solely on the basis of this research thesis, this view should be considered as an important part of the justification for undertaking the project. The manner of conduct of this project is also important because in selecting and applying pertinent research we will, actually for the first time, combine extremely competent and high level personnel in both the social and technical disciplines who are concerned with coercive persuasion. I am also greatly impressed by the opportunity to provide a research arena into which all of the research competence in this subject matter can be brought from the various agencies; this has not been possible to date except in highly technical fields due primarily to the operational inferences which one would draw from knowledge of specific CIA research in the areas of hypnosis and drugs and special uses of medical and psychological specialists in such areas as human conditioning. This project will avoid publication of sensitive technical information.

3. Aside from the above research aspects and thinking in terms of immediate foreseeable uses for a text in Russian and Chinese coercive persuasion against both the population and the individual, the following are some of the needs which consumers have given to this office. The

I [redacted] states that such a volume would be of great use to their intelligence analysts concerned with Russian and Chinese coercive persuasion as they have no such systematic, historical document available. [redacted] also feels that a thorough stock-taking is necessary

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at this time in this field in order to think ahead on further research needs. They believe that continuing research is needed because no tenable thesis has been drawn which sets forth the conditions under which populations or individuals will either withstand or give in to political pressure and/or individual indoctrination. The [redacted] position has been given us after they had carefully reviewed their available materials and after construction of a bibliography in this field which they supplied to us. To turn to the [redacted] [redacted] places great emphasis upon the immediate use of such a text in the various [redacted] training areas. [redacted] has stated to this office that this project would be of use to them in connection with the following: The training of troops in a better understanding of the enemy and thus diminishing the fear of the unknown, rehabilitation of returned POWs, determination of Russian and Chinese vulnerabilities to a U. S. display of strength in peace time and to psychological warfare in wartime, civil affairs and military government in planning occupation themes, training of special forces in construction of appeals for indigenous guerrilla recruitment. [redacted] has examined all their pertinent available research before giving this position, and in sum, their attitude is that such research to date has been limited both in source and objective. [redacted] similar to [redacted] would use such a text as contributing to the work of their intelligence analysts and media propagandists as well as in their training program.

4. TSS Chemical Division is, within the Agency, the center of psychological and such other scientific research in the technical fields as necessary to support research on influencing human behavior. TSS has carefully reviewed all extant research (ongoing and published literature) and attests that no such text as is proposed in this project on coercive persuasion is available. TSS, although in possession of pertinent research in this field, has enthusiastically endorsed this project for the following reasons: (a) they need the application of other disciplines to their field, and in fact, find one of their principal research organizations already moving in this direction; b) TSS is not able internally to undertake an analysis of available research as is proposed without either adding other disciplines to their staff or otherwise augmenting their staff; c) this project will provide continuing research in this area for the next two years, during which period there will be other research findings both private and governmental which will be taken into account; d) this project will provide TSS with an appropriate means for following up the so called brainwashed individuals to determine the persistence of the effects of their retention in the bloc; e) TSS has, among other requirements, an [redacted] requirement supported by the Chief, [redacted] and his staff for the kind of research envisaged by this project insofar as it assists [redacted] in its problem involving persuasion or dissuasion of defectors.

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I strongly recommend that you concur in the attached project.

Special Assistant to the Director
for Planning and Coordination

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